Sino-Indian cooperation in I.T. sector

4533. SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and China have decided to cooperate in bridging the digital divide and are looking to produce low cost computers for their rural masses as well as for exports;

(b) if so, whether a high-level Indian delegation visited China, discussed ways and means to enhance Indo-China cooperation in the IT sector.

(c) whether Government have launched an ambitious plan to bridge the digital divide between urban and rural people; and

(d) if so, whether Government have urged Chinese to pool in their expertise in the hardware sector to meet the requirements of the combined populations of the two countries?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) to (b) During the course of Minister's visit to China in July, 2000, a Memorandum of Undertstanding (MoU) for bilateral cooperation in the IT sector was signed between India and China when the following cooperative projects of common concern in the field of information technology were identified:

(i) Computer;

(ii) Enterprise networks;

(iii) Information Technology

(iv) Micro-electronic technology and integrated circuit;

(v) Software and its application and products;

(vi) Internet technologies and their application;

(vii) Transfer of information technologies;

(viii) Establishing manufacturing joint ventures of information technology equipment;

Recently an official delegation was deputed to China to pursue the matter further.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The two major initiatives of Government of India in regard to bridging the digital divide, consist of setting up Media Lab Asia for delivering emerging technologies in direct services of masses, and setting up 487 Community Information Centres in the eight North Eastern States.

MoU between India and Singapore

4534. SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Singapore have signed a Memorandum of Understanding in telecom sector;

(b) if so, whether this was signed during the Prime Minsiter's visit to Singapore;

(c) if so, the details of the agreement; and

(d) the steps being taken to implement it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The details of areas identified in the agreement, are given in the Statement. (*See* below)

(d) The Joint Working Group will be set up for the implementation of the proposal identified in the MoU of the Telecom Sector.

Statement

Details of the area identified in the agreement in telecom sector

(i) The exchange of information on Telecommunications policy and regulation.

(ii) the exchange of scientific and technical information and exchange of views on Telecommunications;